

UNDERSTAND YOUR F-1 EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS



Federal laws & regulations have strict guidelines about working in the United States, and violations can impact you in many ways, including denials for future visa applications and employment authorizations, and even termination of your SEVIS record. Understand your benefits and what employment is authorized so you can maintain your lawful F-1 status!



ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

Do not begin any internship, practicum, work, or training opportunity (even unpaid) before speaking with your DSO!



On-campus employment is the most common employment benefit available to F-1 students and generally is approved for work that is done:

- on school grounds that directly serves the student body. You can be employed by HPU or by another company that is located on campus, but not all work qualifies within F-1 regulations.
- off campus at a location that is educationally affiliated with HPU doing work that is associated with HPU's curriculum or related to contractually-funded research projects done at the post-graduate level.
- pursuant to the terms of a scholarship, fellowship or assistantship.

You can work in any on-campus position that meets federal qualifications provided your position does not displace a U.S. worker. Your job duties do not have to be related to your major. Speak with your DSO about authorization.

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT



Off-campus employment is work that takes place outside of the school's campus that does not qualify for on-campus employment. Generally speaking, off-campus work is not permitted. Three exceptions exist for F-1 students:

SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

A temporary employment authorization may be available for F-1 students who face severe economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond their control that makes it difficult to continue their studies in the United States. To qualify, you'll need to prove your financial situation and demonstrate why on-campus employment is unavailable or insufficient to meet your financial needs.

SPECIAL STUDENT RELIEF

A suspension of certain regulatory requirements may be available for nonimmigrants who are experiencing severe economic hardship as a result of emergent circumstances in their country of citizenship. Emergent circumstances are world events that create significant financial hardships, such as natural disasters, wars, military conflicts, and national or international financial crises. Regulatory requirements that may be suspended or altered for an F-1 student include duration of status, full course of study, and off-campus employment eligibility. To qualify, you'll need to meet the Special Student Relieve (SSR) Student Criteria, including maintaining F-1 status and proving severe economic hardship.

INTERNSHIP WITH AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Students who are offered an internship with a public international organization that falls within the International Organization Immunities Act may be eligible for employment benefits to participate in that internship while in the United States. To qualify, your internship must be located in the U.S. and you must present a written certification from the international organization that the proposed employment is within the scope of the organization's sponsorship.

In order to be authorized for off-campus employment, your DSO must first recommend you in SEVIS, and then you must submit the Form I-765: *Application for Employment Authorization* with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Your approval and Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will come from USCIS.



UNAUTHORIZED EMPLOYMENT

"Employment" is any work performed or services provided (including self-employment) in exchange for money or other forms of compensation or benefits (e.g., free room, accommodations, or merchandise). Unauthorized employment is taken very seriously by U.S. immigration officials. Familiarize yourself with your F-1 employment, practical training, and volunteer eligibility options and always contact your DSO before accepting any positions. Failure to adhere to employment regulations can result in termination of the SEVIS record, having to depart the United States immediately, and risking denial of future work authorizations, employment, visas, permanent residency, or citizenship.



The Federal government has not issued guidance permitting F-1 student athletes to benefit from their Name, Image, or Likeness (NIL). Follow existing employment laws. Consult your DSO before accepting NIL contracts.

PRACTICAL TRAINING

INTERNSHIPS & PRACTICUMS

CPT

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING

CPT is a temporary authorization for practical training or employment directly related to your major field of study that is an *integral part of an established curriculum*, meaning it is a required part of your program for all enrolled students. This includes alternate work/study, paid or unpaid internships, practicums, clinical rotations, and cooperative education experiences offered by sponsoring employers through formal cooperative agreements with HPU.

CPT cannot be authorized to satisfy minor or general education requirements, nor for noncurricular job training, financial need, or personal employment opportunities. The following must be true:

Undergraduate Student Criteria

- The work must be directly related to your major.
- The training must be required for your degree, such as a class, internship, or practicum.
- You must have completed one year of study in active F-1 status.

Graduate Student Criteria

- The work must be directly related to your major.
- The training must be required for graduation, such as a class, internship, or practicum.
- You must have completed one year of study in active F-1 status unless the training is required in the first year.

CPT must be authorized by your DSO before beginning any employment activities. See your DSO for more information.

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

OPT

OPT is a temporary authorization for practical training or employment directly related to your major field of study that supplements classroom learning with real-world work experiences. OPT provides up to 12 months of employment authorization per degree level completed in the USA (bachelor, master, doctoral). OPT typically takes place immediately following graduation ("post-completion OPT"), but can be done in part or whole before ("pre-completion OPT").

STEM OPT EXTENSION

Students in specific STEM fields who are authorized for post-completion OPT may also apply for a 24-month STEM OPT extension, bringing the total employment authorization up to 36 months.



Authorization begins with your DSO and is granted by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). You can apply for both pre- and post-completion OPT, but each period of OPT requires a separate application to USCIS. Cumulative OPT employment cannot exceed 12 months per degree level. The standard processing fee is ~\$500, and adjudication can take 3+ months. Premium (expedited) processing is available for an additional fee, totaling ~\$2,000, and can shorten adjudication to ~4 weeks; however, premium processing is subject to adjudicator availability.

To be eligible for OPT, you must have completed one year of study in active F-1 status.

Accumulating 12+ months of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) at the same education level makes F-1 students ineligible for OPT.



VOLUNTEERISM

As an F-1 student, you are permitted to volunteer, but your position:

- cannot be for compensation or any type of remuneration,
- cannot displace a genuine employee,
- must be for non-profit organizations doing charitable or humanitarian work only,
- must not be work for which you had previously been paid or for work for which you may be paid in the future.

Provided your volunteer experience meets all of these requirements, you may be permitted to participate in the volunteer activity and maintain your F-1 status. If an experience is explained to you and it does not meet each of these requirements, F-1 regulations do not permit you to participate in the experience. Doing so would be seen as unauthorized employment which would result in termination of your SEVIS record.

Employment laws and regulations are strict about fair and equitable labor. No one wants you to find yourself in a position that is performing unpaid labor disguised as volunteerism. Let us help you stay in status!

